

CHAPTER 10

AWARDS

Awards are important symbols of recognition and a means of publicly recognizing extraordinary, exceptionally meritorious, or conspicuously outstanding acts of heroism and other acts of service that are above and beyond that normally expected.

In this chapter we discuss how award recommendations are prepared using the information contained in the *Navy and Marine Corps Awards Manual*, SECNAVINST 1650.1.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Awards are intended to recognize truly exceptional performance and valor. The value of an award is that it is given in cases only where it is clearly deserved.

Awards recognizing specific acts should be given as soon as possible after the act occurred. Recognition of sustained superior performance should normally be given at the termination of the period during which that person demonstrated that performance, such as at the end of the person's assigned tour of duty. A routine end of tour award **IS NOT** a part of the awards system.

ELIGIBLE PERSONNEL

Personnel eligible to receive awards include personnel in the naval service, the U.S. Marine Corps, reserve components, and the U.S. Coast Guard (when the Coast Guard or units thereof operate under the control of the Navy). Also eligible are U.S. Naval Academy midshipman and Naval Reserve Officer Training Corp (NROTC) midshipmen when serving on active duty.

Anyone who meets the eligibility criteria for an award may be recommended for it by

any commissioned officer senior to the individual being recommended.

AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

The Secretary of the Navy has delegated the authority to approve the Navy Achievement Medal (NAM) to commanders or commanding officers eligible to wear the Command at Sea or Command Ashore device, also known as a command NAM.

Under this policy, the NAM may only be awarded to junior officers (LCDR or below) and enlisted personnel, and must be for special achievement and NOT for a person's tour.

QUOTA SYSTEM

A quota system has been established for issuing command NAMs based on the number of billets authorized in the command's Manpower Authorization Document of Authorization. The quotas are computed separately for officers and enlisted personnel. Commands with 100 or less billets are authorized four NAMs per fiscal year. Commands with between 101 and 650 billets are authorized two NAMs per each 50 billets or fraction thereof. Commands with greater than 650 billets are authorized two NAMs per 75 billets for any fraction over 650.

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARDS

As previously stated, a recommendation for an award may be submitted by any commissioned officer, senior to the individual being recommended, having knowledge of any act, achievement, or service which may warrant the award. A recommendation originated by other than the commanding

officer of the individual concerned must be forwarded to the commanding officer for endorsement.

TIMELINESS

An awards recommendation must be submitted as soon as possible following the act, achievement, or service upon which it is based if the awards system is to be successful.

Submit recommendation for meritorious service when an individual's detachment is anticipated. When a reporting senior is being detached and feels that the service of a subordinate merits recognition, the Personal Award Recommendation form, OPNAV 1650/3, should be completed for the observed period. It should be retained within the command, pending detachment of the individual. If at the time the current reporting senior feels the latter portion of the individual's tour merits recognition, the recommendation should be combined with the earlier one; if not, the recommendation of the predecessor should be forwarded for consideration on its own merits by the awarding authority empowered to approve the award.

An award for meritorious service terminating with retirement or separation should be processed so that the presentation may be made at the individual's current duty station.

PREPARATION

Prepare recommendations for personal awards on OPNAV Form 1650/3. Instructions for the preparation of the awards form can be found in chapter 2 of the *Awards Manual*. When additional space is required, add sheets of standard size paper. Use a separate form for each award being recommended.

SUMMARY OF ACTION

Since each award recommendation is evaluated on the merits of the justification, this part of the recommendation is required in all cases. Avoid generalities and excessive use of superlatives. Present an objective summary giving specific examples of the performance and manner of accomplishing it together with the results and benefits derived.

CITATION

A proposed citation, which is a condensed version of the summary of action, must accompany the recommendation. Although a citation is laudatory and formal, it must be factual and contain no classified information. Non-combat citations are limited to 22 typewritten lines.

Opening Sentence

The citation begins with a standard phrase describing the degree of meritorious or heroic service as specified in the *Awards Manual* for each award, the duty assignment of the individual, the inclusive dates of service on which the recommendation is based, and if desired, a description of operations of the unit to which the individual is attached.

Statement of Heroic/Meritorious Achievement or Service

The second part of the citation identifies the recipient by name, describes specific duty assignments, accomplishments, and the outstanding personal attributes displayed. The description of the individual's achievements must show clearly that they were sufficient to justify the award recommended. If duty was performed in combat, the citation should so state.

Commendatory Remarks

The third part of the citation states that the outstanding attributes, mentioned or implied, “reflected great credit upon him/herself and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

SUBMISSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Two months should be allowed for the administrative processing of award recommendations. Allow 90 days if the award is submitted through a lengthy chain of command or during the summer months (late May through August).

Classified recommendations may be submitted; however, the highest classification which may be handled is SECRET. If information classified higher than SECRET is essential, submit it separately.

Recommendations may be sent by message or fax only in the most unusual circumstances; such as when the importance of a timely presentation justifies special handling.

Address recommendations directly to the awarding authority having jurisdiction over the individual at the time of the act or service. A list of awarding authorities is provided in the *Awards Manual*.

Awarding authorities may take one of the following actions:

- Approve the award.
- Approve a lower award.
- Disapprove the award.
- Approve a higher award, if empowered to do so, or recommend a higher award to the appropriate authority.
- Return the award for further clarification or justification.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION AND COMMENDATION

Letters of appreciation (LOA) and letters of commendation (LOC) are intended to promote morale. These kinds of letters are difficult to write. In most cases they are tailored to the recipient and cannot be reused. These letters are normally given at the command level, but can be issued by the next higher echelon in the command's chain of command.

In an LOA, begin by expressing thanks to the individual. In an LOC, begin by commending the individual for his or her support or accomplishments. Next, in both types of letters, summarize the type of support or accomplishments that the individual is being recognized for. Then end by thanking or praising the individual once again. A penned postscript on the letter gives it a special meaning.

SUMMARY

This chapter has dealt with the most common awards issued to personnel. The *Awards Manual* lists all other awards that may be issued, and detailed processing procedures. You will become very familiar with this manual as you gain experience, remember, when in doubt, go to the manual.

